

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5311

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions, January 29, 2002

Title: An act relating to applying RCW 41.

Brief Description: Applying RCW 41.56.430 through 41.56.490 to employees working under a site certificate issued under chapter 80.50 RCW.

Sponsors: Senators Prentice, Patterson and Fairley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions: 2/8/01, 1/29/02 [DP, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Keiser, Vice Chair; Benton, Fairley, Franklin, Gardner, Rasmussen, Regala and Winsley.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Hochstatter and Honeyford.

Staff: Jack Brummel (786-7428)

Background: Employees of counties and municipal corporations, including agencies operating nuclear power plants, bargain their wages and working conditions under the Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA). Although PECBA does not grant any public employee the right to strike, it explicitly recognizes the public policy against strikes by "uniformed personnel." When contract negotiations reach an impasse and cannot be resolved through mediation, PECBA requires uniformed personnel to settle disputes through binding interest arbitration. "Uniformed personnel" do not include operating and maintenance employees of nuclear power plants.

Summary of Bill: Operating and maintenance employees of the Hanford nuclear power plant must settle certain contract disputes through binding interest arbitration.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 1, 2001.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: These workers are the public's first line of defense in emergencies. Strikes or work stoppages would detract from safety; this would resolve disputes through binding arbitration.

Testimony Against: This will complicate bargaining.

Testified: PRO: David Timothy, Thomas McMahon; Spencer Clark; Richard King, IBEW;
CON: David Orcutt.